THE BATTLE OF THE SANTA CRUZ MOUNTAINS

By REV. A. S. COATS, D. D.

I stood upon the mountains' broad expanse
And watched the sunrise of a day in May.
The loftiest tree-tops first caught up his fires,
And every twittering throat burst in full choir.
And then I marked how slowly from below,
Uprolling from the broad Pacific's breast,
A mist impalpable, not to be caught nor weighed,
And yet so dense no fiercest ray of light
Could penetrate and conquer its dull gloom,
Extinguished quite the sun's first brazen fires
And hushed completely every note of praise.
Again the sun would struggle through the night
And touch the loftiest peaks with a brief glow;
But soon the ocean, knowing his desire,
Sent up still denser cohorts, rank on rank,
And forced from him confession of defeat.
Not once nor twice, but many, many times
These two, the ocean and the sun, in strife,
Tried each his prowess on these lofty heights,
And every time the mist proved conqueror!
Such is the subtle night of error's power
In age-long warfare with the sons of light:
Nor lack there ever stalwart men and brave,
Who snatch the gauntlet thrown down at their feet
By all the hosts triumphant of huge wrong,
And boldly carry on the age-long fight.
But did the mist prove conqueror in the end?
Nay, nay, thou infidel and pessimist
Who judgest by the seeing of the eye;
His triumph was but for the morning hour,
While glad the sun reigned all the long, bright day.
And I opine this is the morning hour
Of man's long life beneath the flaming stars,
And prophecy of Truth's eternal reign!

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